

● **NEW WAC RULES EFFECTIVE JANUARY 18, 2001**

*Chapter 296-46A WAC—Safety Standards-Installing Electrical Wires and Equipment-Administrative Rules* was effective January 18th. The department is allowing a 90-day transition period for compliance with this chapter. Contractors and installers have until April 18, 2001 to come into full compliance with these rules. Until then our electrical inspectors will allow installations to meet requirements as outlined in either the old chapter 296-46 WAC or the new chapter 296-46A WAC, not a mixture of both. This transition period is intended to give contractors and installers a chance to obtain a printed copy of the rules and become familiar with all the law and rule revisions before the department requires full compliance. Published rules are available now on the electrical website. Printed publications will be available about March 1.

*Chapter 296-401B WAC—Certification of Competency for Journeyman Electricians* was also effective January 18, 2001. There is no transition period for compliance with WAC 296-401B. This chapter of the WAC has transition periods defined within the rule.

● **Stakeholders Meetings**

The department is again offering 4 Continuing Education Units credit (CEU's) for those who attend the meetings and successfully complete a take-home examination.

**Stakeholder Meeting Schedule**

Feb 15, 2001	Port Angeles City Council Chambers 321 E 5 <sup>th</sup> Street, <b>Port Angeles</b> , WA	6:30 PM-8:30 PM
Feb 20, 2001	Skagit Valley College, Angst Hall-Room 22 2405 E College Way, <b>Mount Vernon</b> , WA	7:00 PM-9:00 PM
Feb 21, 2001	Bellingham City Council Chambers 311 Grand Avenue, <b>Bellingham</b> , WA	7:00 PM-9:00 PM

Additional stakeholder meetings are being planned for the month of March in **Okanogan, Wenatchee, Moses Lake, Kennewick, Walla Walla, Ellensburg, and Yakima**. Dates and times of these meetings will be announced in the March issue of this newsletter and you can contact the local L&I offices for this information.

● **New Internet Address for the Electrical Section Home Page**

Effective January 31, 2001, our network administrators changed our Internet address to:

**[www.lni.wa.gov/scs/electrical](http://www.lni.wa.gov/scs/electrical)**

Please update this address in any browser "bookmarks" or "favorites" that you have saved. We use this resource as our first-line of communications of information important to our customers.

● **Electrical Board Recruitment**

The Electrical Advisory Board consists of fourteen (14) members appointed by the Governor for a regular term of four years per member. Representation on the Board includes three electrical contractors, one electrical utility representative, one manufacturer, three certified electricians, one combination electrical/RCDD certified engineer, one general public member, one telecommunications worker, one telecommunications contractor, one telecommunications service provider and one building official (non-voting).

At the present time, three Electrical Board appointments are scheduled to expire on July 7, 2001. One position represents combination electrical/RCDD certified engineers, one represents certified electricians, and the other represents the telecommunications workers. Incumbent members may apply for reappointment to their positions, and new, interested, qualified persons may also apply for these three positions.

An *Application for Gubernatorial Appointment to a Board or Commission* form is necessary. Requests for copies of the application and any questions may be directed to Angie Wharton at (360) 902-5259 or Rhonnda Jenkins at (360) 902-5572.

Applicants should submit a letter of interest, completed application form, and current resume to the office of the Chief Electrical Inspector, PO Box 44460, Olympia, WA 98504-4460, by no later than April 1, 2001.

### ● **Special Provision for non-IC Rated Recessed Fixtures**

NEC 410-66(a) and (b) requires recessed lighting fixtures to be installed a minimum of ½ inch. (12.7 mm) away from combustible materials unless the fixture is IC rated. Type IC rated fixtures may be installed in contact with combustible materials. Depending on the size and type of the fixture, manufacturers installation instructions included in the listing of a fixture may require greater spacing from insulation or combustible materials than the NEC does.

Our inspectors occasionally encounter installations of non-IC rated recessed lighting fixtures in spaces that the Washington State Energy Code requires to be insulated. Since fixtures that are not IC rated must meet minimum clearance requirements and cannot contact insulation, some contractors have enclosed the fixture by building a **permanent, structurally sound** box around the fixture. This installation is acceptable to the department, provided the clearance from this structural box to all sides and above the fixture meets the minimum clearance from thermal insulation requirements in NEC 410-66(b) or the manufacturer's installation instructions, whichever is greater.

Thermal insulation installed outside and above such a box will not be considered as "installed over a recessed fixture such that it would entrap the heat produced by the fixture" when the appropriate "dead air" space described above is maintained around the fixture.

### ● **Separation of Class 2 and Class 3 Circuit Conductors from Other Conductors**

There has been some confusion over whether it is permissible to install class 2 and class 3 circuit conductors in the same bored holes as type NM-B branch circuit cable.

The main text of NEC 725-54 (a)(3) states: "Conductors of Class 2 and Class 3 circuits shall be separated by at least 2 in. (50.8 mm) from conductors of any electric light, power, class 1, nonpower-limited fire alarm, or medium power network-powered broadband communications circuits." Exception No. 1 to this requirement clearly allows class 2 and class 3 circuit conductors to run closer than the 2-inch separation when either all of the class 2 and class 3 conductors, or all of the other circuit conductors listed above are in nonmetallic sheathed cable.

Although there may be "system performance" reasons to maintain separation of these conductors, telephone, thermostat, and similar class 2 and class 3 circuits are permitted in the same bored holes as power and lighting circuits run in type NM-B cable.

### ● **Code Question of the Month**

**This month's Code Question:** The source of power for a 1999 NEC Article 700 Emergency System may be a tap ahead of the main service disconnect. True or False?

**Last month's Question:** (*What is the permissible voltage drop allowed on feeders and branch circuits?*) The answer is: D. (Not a code requirement only a Fine Print Note).